

Government stopped the vote counting in a blatant move to manipulate the results. Accusations of vote rigging forced the National Electoral Board of Ethiopia, NEBE, to delay the release of the official results.

The controversy led to protests in Addis Ababa, the Oromiya regions, and other provinces. On June 8, in response to protesters challenging the provisional results of the elections, Ethiopian security forces are accused of shooting at least 40 protestors, killing 26, temporarily detaining over 500 student protestors and arresting at least 50 people. Ethiopia's main opposition political party, the Coalition for Unity and Democracy Party, CUDP, refused to take its seats in Parliament in protest of the election results. Just recently, 50 members of the CUDP took their seats in Parliament, but there is some concern that they were pressured into doing so.

Last month, the situation in Ethiopia took a further turn for the worse. On November 1, following street demonstrations that erupted into 4 days of violence when police started shooting, at least 46 protestors were killed in Addis Ababa and other towns, and some 4,000 were arrested. There have been numerous reports of widespread arbitrary detention, beatings, torture, disappearances, and the use of excessive force by police and soldiers against anyone suspected of supporting the CUDP detainees.

The detainees include distinguished Ethiopian patriots such as Hailu Shawel, president of the CUDP; Professor Mesfin Woldemariam, former chair of the Ethiopian Human Rights Council; Dr. Yacob Hailemariam, a former U.N. Special Envoy and former prosecutor at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda; Ms. Birtukan Mideksa, CUDP vice president and a former judge; and Dr. Berhanu Negga, the recently elected mayor of Addis Ababa and university professor of economics.

Today, the entire senior leadership of the CUDP is reportedly in jail and has been held incommunicado in harsh conditions, without access to their families or legal representatives. Amnesty International considers these individuals to be prisoners of conscience who have neither used nor advocated violence. The government of Prime Minister Meles Zenawi is seeking to charge them with treason, a capital offense, for the "crime" of urging their supporters to engage in peaceful protest on their behalf. CUDP leaders are scheduled to appear in court today, presumably to be officially charged with treason.

Journalists and members of the media have also been jailed. According to the Committee to Protect Journalists, Ethiopian authorities have prevented most private newspapers from publishing, arrested or harassed local journalists and their family members, and threatened to charge journalists with treason. Thirteen journalists have

been detained since last month's antigovernment protests, including two more who were just arrested this week.

It is particularly disturbing, when one considers these events, that since 1991, the government of Prime Minister Meles has received billions of dollars in foreign aid, including to strengthen democratic institutions and the rule of law in his country. Recently, the European Union suspended its aid to Prime Minister Meles' government and is seeking ways to channel it to the Ethiopian people through private voluntary organizations.

Last month, thousands of Ethiopians and their supporters in this country came to Washington to protest the violence and repression by the Meles government and to urge the Bush administration to help establish real democracy and the rule of law in Ethiopia. Ethiopia has been an ally of the United States in combating international terrorism, yet it is using similar tactics against its own people.

Over the past several years, Ethiopia has made progress in both political reform and economic development. But that progress has been overshadowed by the tragic events of the past 6 months. The Government's heavy-handed tactics to steal the election and persecute those who sought to play by the rules of democracy, should be universally condemned.

The Bush administration should make clear to Prime Minister Meles that if his government does not abide by the basic principles of democracy, due process and respect for human rights, including an end to the use of random searches, beatings, mass arrests and lethal force against peaceful protestors, and if political detainees are not released, that we will join with the European Union and suspend our aid to his government, including our support for financing from the World Bank and the African Development Bank other than for basic human needs. There should be severe consequences for such a flagrant subversion of the will of the Ethiopian people.

LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2005

Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the need for hate crimes legislation. Each Congress, Senator KENNEDY and I introduce hate crimes legislation that would add new categories to current hate crimes law, sending a signal that violence of any kind is unacceptable in our society. Likewise, each Congress I have come to the floor to highlight a separate hate crime that has occurred in our country.

On January 30, 1999, a 23-year-old disabled man was lured into an apartment in Keansburg, NJ. He was then subjected to three hours of torture at the hands of nine men and women. According to police, the abusers knew the man from their neighborhood, and ridi-

culed him constantly because of his disability.

I believe that the Government's first duty is to defend its citizens, to defend them against the harms that come out of hate. The Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act is a symbol that can become substance. I believe that by passing this legislation and changing current law, we can change hearts and minds as well.

CAREGIVERS

Mr. OBAMA. Mr. President, across the country there are more than 6 million children living in households headed by a grandparent or other relative. Regardless of the reason children enter relative—care the death of a parent, neglect, abuse, military deployment, or poverty—it is never, ever the fault of the child. I commend grandparents and other relatives who step forward to care for these children, keeping the children out of foster care while providing safe, stable homes, often at great personal sacrifice.

In my state of Illinois, 9 percent of the children live with nonparent relatives. Grandparents and other relative caregivers often provide the best chance for a loving and stable childhood for the children in their care, but their hard work and dedication often goes unnoticed. Today I offer my formal acknowledgement and deepest appreciation for the ongoing service of these caregivers to our country and our Nation's most valuable asset—our children.

There are still far too many barriers preventing grandparent- and other relative-caregivers from accessing the services they need. For example, even though grandparent-caregivers are eligible for many housing programs through the Department of Housing and Urban Development, HUD officials on the ground often unwittingly exclude grandparents from accessing housing because of confusion over the relevant laws. For this reason, I recently worked with my colleague Senator STABENOW to obtain \$4 million in new funding for grandparent-caregiver housing demonstration projects.

I look forward to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to improve access to services for grandparent- and other relative-headed households. My grandparents played a central role in my upbringing, and without them I would not be standing before you today. I am certain that the same can be said of thousands of children and adults in Illinois and across the country. It is time that we recognize the contributions of these worthy relative-caregivers, and grant them the access to Federal services that they deserve.

CONFIRMATION OF SUSAN BODINE

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, today, I am releasing the hold I placed on the nomination of Susan Bodine for Assistant Administrator, Office of Solid